



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 23, 2004

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**EL PASO MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN FEDERAL COURT TO MURDERING HIS WIFE**

**United States Attorney Johnny Sutton** announced today that 66-year-old Ben Rogers Frakes, Jr., pled guilty to murdering his wife on July 7, 2003, on the grounds of the Fort Bliss Recreational Vehicle Park.

Appearing before United States District Judge Philip R. Martinez this afternoon, Frakes pled guilty to one count of 2<sup>nd</sup> degree murder and one count of using a firearm in commission of a crime of violence. By pleading guilty, Frakes admitted that he willfully, deliberately, maliciously and with premeditation and malice aforethought shot and killed his wife, Debra L. Harmon, with a Smith and Wesson 9mm semi-automatic pistol. According to the factual basis, Frakes shot her several times following a verbal argument and physical confrontation with the deceased.

Frakes remains in federal custody. Pursuant to a plea agreement, Frakes faces 15 years in federal prison. Sentencing is scheduled for 10:00a.m. on June 23, 2004.

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Defense Criminal Investigations Division and the El Paso Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney William F. Lewis, Jr., is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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